



**City of Rockville  
Testimony of Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton  
Joint House and Senate Priorities Hearing  
November 20, 2013**

Good evening, I'm Bridget Donnell Newton, Mayor of Rockville. First I'd like to thank the Montgomery County Delegation for the opportunity to speak and for all of your support in Annapolis. I'm here this evening on behalf of the City to ask for your support for Rockville's 2014 State Legislative Program.

Rockville has a robust legislative program that includes continuing and new priorities. A brief overview of our program is as follows:

- Rockville and MML have once again adopted the restoration of municipal Highway User Revenues as its top priority for 2014. We are extremely grateful to the General Assembly and the Governor for the one-time restoration of \$15.4 million in addition to \$7 million in HUR approved in the FY14 Adopted State budget. However, the \$7 million the municipalities are scheduled to receive in FY15 and beyond is far less than the \$45 million pre-recession level. A permanent solution is needed to address this critical funding gap.
- In the 2013 Session, there were efforts to modify State law and standardize speed camera programs. Rockville worked in collaboration with MML,

MACO, and other local partners to ensure the proposals did not negatively impact successful programs such as the City's, that are administered correctly and make streets safer for our residents. The City will repeat this effort should there be similar legislation introduced in 2014.

- Rockville has a comprehensive stormwater program that assesses an equitable utility charge on every property owner that generates stormwater. Payment of the charge is essential for the City to meet its mandated pollution reduction requirements. With the State requiring the ten largest local jurisdictions to adopt a fee by July 1, 2013, there will be increased focus on which property owners will be required to pay local stormwater fees. Rockville will monitor any legislation introduced in 2014 to ensure that the City's fee and program are protected.
- Rockville will closely track any communications tax reform legislation introduced in 2014. We have an award winning cable station that provides critical programming services to our residents. Cable franchise fees and public, education, and capital grants are essential to these operations. The City supports the MML and MACO principles on Communications tax reform that protect municipal and county interests including the protection of local revenues, flexible taxation authority, and the preservation of local franchising and rights of way management.
- In the 2014 Session, Rockville will work with the MML Montgomery Chapter to advocate for increased school construction funding from the State. Current county funding and State authorizations for school construction are insufficient to meet the capacity needs of overcrowded MCPS schools. Rockville supports the joint County and State Delegation

initiative to secure a funding package that would provide MCPS with crucial resources needed to address this growing problem.

- Maryland municipalities continue to face budget pressures resulting from of major State HUR reductions. The State's 2012 maintenance of effort law changes and transfer of a portion of teacher pension costs hamper the ability of Montgomery and other counties to fund other core services such as public safety and transportation. Local governments are in great need of increased State shared revenue support. To that end, the City supports amending State law to require Maryland to share a portion of the sales tax revenue with municipalities and counties.

In closing, I thank the Delegation for this opportunity to share Rockville's legislative priorities. If there are any questions, I would be happy to answer them.